

have had any modifying influence upon the "families of contagious, infectious or communicable diseases." And further, a similar decrease (nearly 10%) for the whole United States is observed. Undoubtedly a certain amount of this decrease is due to a lessened number of deaths from tuberculosis, but not all of it can be thus accounted for. The reports show, however, that the energetic anti-tuberculosis work of past years has had good results and should be continued, if anything more energetically.

Some persons, for reasons best known to themselves, are saying extremely unpleasant things about the administration of the A. M. **UNKIND** A. It has been reported to us that **SLANDER.** certain employees of the *Journal A.*

M. A. have circulated the statement that our Society is attacking the A. M. A. on account of some factional matter. What the particular "factional" matter could be is not reported nor can we imagine. No more can we imagine the Trustees of the A. M. A.—our servants in the conduct of the work of the Association—nor any officer of the Association, permitting such an insult to California physicians. It is true that your Publication Committee and your Council, through the pages of your JOURNAL, have called the attention of the Trustees of the A. M. A. to certain of their methods in conducting the *Journal A. M. A.* which do not seem to conform to medical ethics as promulgated by the Association; but this is far different from an "attack" based upon and due to nothing more substantial than a "factional" feeling. We feel quite sure that no body of physicians in this country have a more deeply rooted affection for the American Medical Association. So proud are we of it and so much has it grown to mean to us that we cannot bear to see it doing even the least little thing that seems inconsistent with the very best and highest in medicine and medical ethics. This rumor is, apparently, nothing more than an attempt to stir up ill feeling and give some ground for the plea of "jealousy"; it is too preposterous; we will have to have something more than the name of a "Mr. Brown" attached to it before we can give it the slightest credence. We are loyal to the A. M. A., and all we ask of the Trustees is that they put the accumulation of a large fund second, and a more active and energetic application of the "Principles of Medical Ethics" first. And this we believe they are doing, now that the matter has been called to their attention, for with each succeeding issue of the *Journal*, we notice that there are more additions to the list of proprietaries with the advertisement of which the formula is given. Gentlemen, we thank you and we congratulate you. But do the good work more fully; make your formulas *quantitative* and not merely qualitative; the qualitative formula is absolutely valueless.

The Cancer Commission of Harvard, in its report made early in November, is in almost every particular destructive rather than constructive. Apparently **THE CANCER** the parasitic theory of causation **COMMISSION.** must eventually be absolutely abandoned; and equally apparently our hope of ever having definite information as to cause must wait until vastly more knowledge of the processes of metabolism and tissue nutrition has been gained. The work is necessarily slow and tedious. One thing the report seems to confirm, and that is the uselessness of wasting time in the treatment of any form of cancer by the X-rays. Even when, in some cases, improvement seems to follow their use, the result is probably due to a process not unlike cauterization. Exposure to radio-activity after operation is desirable, but removal of the malignant neoplasm should be secured by operation. In the main, the report corresponds closely with the findings of the commission of the British association.

Elsewhere in this number of the JOURNAL will be found a list of the gentlemen who have been chosen to make and unmake and amend the laws of the State of **WATCH THE** California for the session beginning January 1, 1905. Study **LEGISLATURE.** this list carefully. Bring up the matter in your county society, and discuss the personnel of the men from your section of the State. We have the best of reasons to believe that the quacks and charlatans and illegal practitioners—not to speak of the eddyites—will make an attempt to have the present medical law emasculated—amended so skillfully that it will be practically valueless. The present law has been found to work well; it has been sustained in every particular by the Supreme Court of California; practically the entire medical profession of the State approves of it, for the number of physicians (licensed) who do not, is inconspicuously small. The Council will arrange to keep a careful watch on all that goes on at Sacramento, but each county society will have to look after the representatives from its territory; have them clearly understand that you do not want the law tampered with and that if they have further political aspirations they had better keep hands off. Don't be too confident and don't go to sleep; watch the legislature till it gets through legislating, and then you may rest.

The JOURNAL is advised that some of its editorial statements anent medicines have been misunderstood. We are sorry. **CHEMICALS vs.** There certainly can be not the **PROPRIETARIES.** slightest ethical objection to the use of definitely known chemical substances. The only possible objection to them can come solely from their multiplicity;

their number no mortal mind can compass! There is a very decided difference between them and secret proprietaries—those mixtures of unknown composition and mysterious virtues. No physician should, under any circumstances, make use of a mixture the composition of which is unknown to him. He does wrong to himself, to his common sense, to his standing in the profession, to his obligations to the sick and to the public, when he does use this stuff. Why? Because he does not know what his patient is taking, and hence may be giving him something highly injurious! With definite chemicals, however, the matter is different. After a new chemical has been studied and its physiological properties have been recognized (and this is generally done before it is put upon the market) there can be no objection to its use, if its action is what you consider desirable for your patient. The whole thing is very simple when you come down to the bottom of it. What are you giving your patient, and how much at a dose? If you know, and it is what you believe your patient needs, use it; if you do not (and nine times out of ten you do not if it is a proprietary mixture), don't touch it; don't soil your hands or your reputation with it. If it is a legitimate medicine, fit for use, the formula should be printed with the advertising statements concerning it; if the formula is not given, leave it alone; it is dangerous.

The manufacturer of a remedy—or medicine—("Any agent or substance used in the treatment of disease") who advertises his remedy to the medical profession in the pages of medical journals, does so, presumably, with the not unreasonable hope that doctors will see the advertisements and prescribe his remedy in the treatment of their patients. That seems to be clear and within the range of probable truth. It necessarily follows, if the remedy is to be intelligently used, that the exact nature or composition must be stated in the advertisement; otherwise the conscientious physician cannot tell what it is nor use it, without loss of dignity to himself and doing injury to a broad fundamental principle of ethics. The Dios Chemical Co. and the Organic Chemical Co. consider themselves injured by the JOURNAL for the reason that their wares were included in a list of some remedies of unknown composition published in the August JOURNAL. The trouble is with the manufacturers and not with us. Had the advertisements of these things stated exactly the composition or nature of the remedies, they would not have been placed in bad company. The Dios Chemical Company manufactures remedies that are mixtures and it is with pleasure we note that their advertisement in the *Journal A. M. A.* now includes the formula. It does nobody much good to put the formula on the label of the bottle

and not in the advertisement; the doctor who wishes to prescribe a remedy cannot be expected to go and look at the bottle before he writes his prescription. In the case of the Organic Chemical Co., the remedy advertised appears to be a chemical; but that fact was not stated in the advertisement. The advertisement of definite chemical substances for which letters patent have been issued, should include the chemical name or the formula or the number of the patent, simply for purposes of identification.

"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained wisdom." With a complacency truly beautiful to behold we look upon Japan as an infant among nations, and are tremendously surprised that she can do things like other civilized peoples. So it has come like a shock to the medical men of this country, to learn that the medical corps of the Japanese army is the most efficient body of its kind in the world; even when handicapped with some really truly American Red Cross nurses, headed by Dr. Anita McGee and enlarded with tins of meat extract, ordered by telegraph. Japan, through her army medical corps, has shown the nations of the world their ignorance and crude folly in allowing 80% of deaths in an army on a war footing, to occur from preventable diseases. What a jar to our Occidental complacency! It has been conservatively estimated that the advantage of Russia in the total number of possible combatants is quite fully counterbalanced by the ability of the medical department of Japan to prevent needless loss of life by disease. Think of our impudence in sending tinned-beef-red-cross aid to a people who have, in spite of it, put the balance of the world to open shame!

The sixteenth edition of the Register and Directory, just issued by the State Society, contains very few errors; or rather, contained very few at the time the book went to press. Changes in address are coming in daily and probably there are a number of members who would like to be advised of such changes. It has therefore been decided to publish in the JOURNAL, from month to month, a list of the official changes of address which come to our attention. This list can be made very much more useful if members will bear in mind the necessity of advising this office of all changes promptly. Secretaries of county societies can also very materially aid in the work by checking up the lists of physicians in their respective counties and notifying the publication office of any errors, omissions or corrections noted in the county lists. No mortal man can make a satisfactory directory without the co-operation of others; the